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Viewing cable 06PARIS5014, TFLE01: FRENCH FM RETURNS FROM MIDDLE EAST: LOOKS

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06PARIS5014**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06PARIS5014	2006-07-24 18:20	2011-08-30 01:44	SECRET	Embassy Paris

Appears in these articles:

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VZCZCXRO9631
OO RUEHAG
DE RUEHFR #5014/01 2051820
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9758
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES IMMEDIATE
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE 0846
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE 0413
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE 0848
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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0827
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE 3549
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE 1696

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 005014

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/24/2016

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SUBJECT: TFLE01: FRENCH FM RETURNS FROM MIDDLE EAST: LOOKS TO ROME

REF: PARIS 04982

Classified By: POLITICAL MINISTER COUNSELOR JOSIAH ROSENBLATT FOR REASON 1.4 B/D

¶1. (S) SUMMARY: Political Minister Counselor met on July 24 with FM Douste-Blazy's Middle East Cabinet Advisor, Christophe Guilhou. Guilhou had returned earlier in the morning with the FM after visiting Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, and Israel. Discussions with leaders in the region, Guilhou said, had focused on the need for an immediate cease-fire, the possibilities for a political process, economic issues (primarily aid and reconstruction efforts), and the conditions for an international force presence. Egypt and Jordan, he said, shared many of France's concerns, while Israel's political goals, and not the toll on the Lebanese people, and economy, were foremost on PM Olmert's mind. Guilhou articulated France's approach going to Rome, particularly on the need for an immediate cease-fire and a political process in place prior to the deployment of an international force, whatever its composition. France could not support deployment of an international force absent a political agreement, one which enjoyed (at least tacit) support of Hezbollah. END SUMMARY

¶2. (S) Political Minister Counselor met on July 24 with FM Douste-Blazy's Middle East Cabinet Advisor, Christophe Guilhou. Guilhou had returned earlier in the morning with the FM after visiting Cyprus, Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, and Israel. He noted that the FM had received the invitation to Wednesday's Core Group Ministerial from the Secretary (via the MFA) on Friday during a meeting with PM Siniora. As a result, he said, Douste-Blazy had turned the focus of his discussions towards economic issues (aid and reconstruction) while trying to get a better understanding from regional players of the political realities.

¶3. (S) According to Guilhou, Douste-Blazy met first with PM Siniora. Siniora expressed his support for full implementation of UNSCR 1559, reiterated the need to disarm Hezbollah, changing the status quo ante, including to address Shebaa Farms. Siniora remained very concerned about the mounting toll from Israeli attacks, and reviewed Lebanese humanitarian needs.

¶4. (S) Guilhou reported that Douste-Blazy's meetings with Jordanian and Egyptian officials produced general agreement that the current situation was threatening to completely destabilize Lebanon's government and would not have the effect of leading to the disarmament of Hezbollah. Quite the contrary, they said, and the French agreed, the more damage to civilian targets and to general infrastructure, the more the Lebanese people would support Hezbollah's targeting of Israel. An immediate cease-fire was the first priority, which would open the way to an enforceable, longer-term political agreement. Guilhou said the Egyptians and the Jordanians both agreed that a return to the pre July 12 status quo ante was not acceptable. They both remained supportive of disarming Hezbollah- but Israel's continued devastation of Lebanon would not bring us to such a conclusion.

¶5. (S) Guilhou explained that Israeli PM Olmert was extremely gracious and treated the French with a great deal of respect and warmth. That said, Olmert's position was rather divergent from their own. Olmert had not expressed regret for Israel's actions, nor compassion for the Lebanese people. Olmert's attitude was that Israel was defending itself; the damage it was inflicting on Lebanon did not enter the equation. Israel had expressed openness to the idea of an international force, noting possible participants such as

NATO, the EU, and Arab states. Douste-Blazy, in response, stressed the need for a political solution before any force could be deployed.

¶16. (S) Looking towards Rome, Guilhou said that France would continue its call for an immediate cease-fire. The GoF (and public opinion) felt strongly that Israel was not only creating a humanitarian disaster, but crippling the Lebanese government, and creating additional support for Hezbollah. France would argue for a political solution that included agreement by Hezbollah to demilitarize. An international force could not be sent in to finish what Israel had started, and end up getting caught in the crossfire. Guilhou did not directly address the composition of such a force, emphasizing instead that agreement on its mandate was the most pressing issue. The GoF hoped that the Rome meeting would address Lebanon's humanitarian needs and identify elements for a durable peace. That said, the GoF did not expect a dramatic announcement outlining a final settlement.

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